



India delivers latest installment of donated vehicles to the ANA

By U.S. Army Reserve
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KABUL, Afghanistan -- Balloons were tied to brand-new trucks aligned into an L-shape, ready to be driven away. But salesmen weren't haggling with customers trying to make deals.

The government of India turned over the keys to 50 four-and-a-half-ton trucks donated to Afghanistan in a ceremony held recently at the Afghan National Army's 1st Brigade, 201st Corps, Motor Pool at the Presidential Palace here.

The new trucks were the latest installment of vehicles donated by the Indian government to the rebuilding of Afghanistan.

The keys to all of the trucks were symbolically turned over from India's foreign minister, Natwar Singh, to Abdul Rahim Wardak, Afghanistan's minister of defense.



Photo by U.S. Army Reserve Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

The keys to all of the trucks were symbolically turned over from India's foreign minister, Natwar Singh, left, to Abdul Rahim Wardak, Afghanistan's minister of defense, at a donation ceremony here.

"The successes of the Afghan National Army could not have been possible without the help and cooperation of many nations," said Wardak. "Today we are seeing a very good example of such cooperation from a country which Afghanistan enjoys historic and very deep-rooted ties of friendship and cooperation."

To conclude the ceremony, transfer documents were signed by Baz Mohammed Jawhari of the Afghan Ministry of Defense, Indian Defense Attaché Gen. Nair Balakrishnah and U.S. Army Col. Len Shartzter from the Office

of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan.

The delivery brings the total to 285 vehicles out of a pledged 300. Fifteen ambulances are scheduled for delivery in the next few months to complete the donation.

"India has been an excellent partner providing support to Afghanistan and these efforts are very much appreciated," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. David Braxton, director of logistics operations at the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan, the facilitator of the ceremony.

At the Bonn Agreement in March 2002, governments were asked to support the rebuilding of Afghanistan. The government of India decided to support



Photo by U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Rueljay Sacbibbit

Members of 1st Brigade, 201st Corps, stand at attention during the donation ceremony held in the motor pool at the Presidential Palace here.



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U.S. Army Maj. Scott Stewart points to the signature block for Baz Mohammed Jawhari of the Afghan Ministry of Defense as U.S. Col. Len Shartzer and Indian Military Attaché Gen. Nair Balakrishnah look on. Stewart and Shartzer are assigned to the Office of Military Cooperation—Afghanistan.

New 4-and-a-half-ton trucks are aligned for the donation ceremony in the Motor Pool at the Presidential Palace here. The government of India officially turned over the keys to 50 trucks to the Afghan National Army.



Photo by U.S. Army National Guard Maj. Rick Peat

Afghanistan by donating the 300 vehicles.

The deliveries started in June 2003. In addition to the 50 trucks donated at the ceremony, India has already delivered 100 two-and-a-half-ton trucks, 120 jeeps and 15 ambulances.

The vehicles, produced by various Indian vehicle manu-

facturers, are all brand-new, although they are slightly different from their Indian counterparts. The donated vehicles all have the steering wheels on the left-hand side. Indian vehicles, as part of the British influence from years past, are usually driven from the right-hand side.

International donations are

important to the future of Afghanistan, and of the Afghan National Army, a point not lost on Minister Wardak.

“It has been a very generous gesture and a good example of regional cooperation,” concluded Wardak. “We are looking forward to further cooperation with the friendly government of India.”

